

PATHWAYS OUT OF FRAGILITY

The Case for a Research Agenda on Inclusive Political Settlements in Fragile States

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This is one part of a two-part preliminary study. It focuses on political settlements (defined below) that follow violence or episodes or imminent threatened violence, to provide an exegesis of the argument that ‘inclusive enough’ settlements matter to stability and thus development in fragile states. It is designed to help establish a research agenda that could test and refine that proposition.

The accompanying study is designed to excavate, through interviews with development field staff, perspectives and story lines on how it is that donors can influence the degree of inclusiveness of political settlements. This is an interim step to a longer-term, more comprehensive study to assess the causal relationship between donor programming and political settlements. The purpose of this initial study is to narrow the field of inquiry by providing ‘theories of change’ that can then be tested.

The two studies come together in a third document – a research and knowledge agenda that can underpin improved policy guidance for action in fragile states.

Prepared with support from the UK Department for International Development, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Carnegie Corporation.

Executive Summary

1. Fragile states, which many development agencies have now made a priority for their work, pose unique developmental challenges. Among these are weak political institutions and legacies of conflict. Many fragile states are now caught in cycles of repeated violence, causing them to lag behind other countries on poverty reduction. Yet some have escaped this pattern of recurring war and have moved onto a more stable trajectory – Mozambique and Nicaragua are but two examples. Others, like Ethiopia and Rwanda, are at an earlier stage of post-conflict development, and the question of whether they will be able to maintain the political stability necessary for continued development success is a vital one.
2. For all of the literature on the causes of war, there is a paucity of research literature on successful recovery. We know less than we should about the ingredients of a successful exit from fragility. In its examination of fragile states, *Conflict, Security and Development: World Development Report 2011* found that one important ingredient in successful exit was an ‘inclusive enough’ political settlement. The purpose of this paper is to unpack and elucidate that claim, and propose a research agenda that can test and refine it.
3. But what, exactly, is a political settlement? There are two quite distinct ways of thinking about political settlements. One approach is oriented towards informal, long-running dynamics between political actors, especially elites. Another is focused on specific, often formal renegotiations of political arrangements – through power-sharing deals, constitutional conferences, peace agreements and the like. Each approach has its merits in substantive terms, and our approach balances them – focusing on discrete events that punctuate longer-running processes. We share with other scholars a focus on arrangements between elites, but emphasize that these should not be viewed as separate from the broader state/society relations in which elites are embedded.
4. For purposes of further research we propose a refinement on a definition adopted by the OECD, as follows: political settlements are *an agreement, principally between elites, but often connected to social groupings, on: the balance and distribution of power and wealth, on the rules of political engagement and on the nature of the longer-running and contested political process that connect state and society*. Moreover, we argue that there is merit, in research terms at least, in focusing in on that sub-set of political settlements that are forged or re-forged in the aftermath of violence or in the face of the imminent threat of violence.
5. We turn then to the question of inclusion. Policy has increasingly highlighted the importance of *inclusion* for sustained peace and development. How strong is the empirical evidence for these arguments?
6. First, there is a growing body of statebuilding literature that points towards inclusion as a source of legitimacy or stability.¹ In addition to these studies, a wider body of literature on elite-pacting supports the notion that agreements among elites are important for stability.² Then, three recent

¹ Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Cornell University Press 2004); Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: a Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (Oxford University Press 2008); Simon Chesterman, Michael Ignatieff and Ramesh Thakur, *Making States Work: State Failure and the Crisis of Governance* (United Nations University Press 2005); Charles Call, “Knowing Peace When You See it: Setting Standards for Peacebuilding Success,” *Civil Wars* 10, no. 2 (2008): 173-194; DW Brinkerhoff, *Capacity Development in Fragile States* (European Center for Development Policy Management 2007); Michael Barnett, “Building a Republican Peace: Stabilizing States after War,” *International Security* 30, no. 4: 87-112; Frances Stewart, with Manuel Barron, Graham Brown, and Marcia Hartwell, “Social Exclusion and Conflict: Analysis and Policy Implications,” (Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity 2006); Thomas F. Keating and W. Andy Knight, *Building Sustainable Peace* (United Nations University Press 2004).

² Michael Burton and John Higley, “Political Crises and Elite Settlements,” in *Elites, Crises, and the Origins of Regimes*, ed. Mattei Dogan and John Higley (Rowman & Littlefield 1998); Caroline Hartzell and Matthew

mixed-method studies works have found more empirical evidence pointing to inclusion as an important factor in escaping cycles of violence and poverty.

7. The 2011 World Development Report analyzed all post-Cold War cases of civil war and relapse, and found that the only cases that avoided relapse (with one exception) were cases that had adopted an inclusive political settlement – either through a negotiated end to war, or, in cases of military victory, through inclusive behavior by the dominating elites. Cases where one sided had ended up in power through military victory and did not find mechanisms to include former opponents in political governance arrangements, typically fell back into conflict.

8. Charles Call has similar findings in his new book *Why Peace Fails*, where he uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative method to identify causes of relapse. He finds: that precipitating exclusionary behavior – in which postwar states adopted a policy violating the expectations of rebels – was the cause for recurrence in 9 of 15 cases; that a violation of power-sharing arrangements was responsible for 6 of the 15 cases of recurrence; that chronic exclusion played a role in two cases of recurrence; that exclusionary behavior was the most important causal factor in 11 of the 15 cases; and, overall, that while exclusion is not the only factor in explaining recurrences, but it is “the most consistently important one.”³

9. Third, the CIA’s Political Instability Task Force finds compelling quantitative evidence about the relationship between inclusive mechanisms and political stability. Through a combination of statistical logistic regression and neural network analyses PITF found that four variables could explain over 80% of all cases of state failure: regime type, infant mortality (as an indirect measure of the quality of life), conflict-ridden neighborhood and state-led discrimination. PITF found surprisingly strong results attached to measures of factionalism, which create “extraordinarily high” risks of instability in situations of open competition.⁴ It also found that political and economic discrimination is strongly linked to instability. Systematic discrimination is found particularly important in models of ethnic war, though it also strengthens the global model.⁵

10. We would judge all of this, taken together, as constituting sufficient initial evidence to warrant further examination. The findings reinforce earlier conclusions from the qualitative literature.⁶

11. Still, to say that it is conclusive evidence would be overstatement. What’s more, studies to date leave unanswered questions about the balance between inclusion and exclusion. How inclusive is inclusive enough? Under what circumstances can excluded actors pose a genuine threat to the stability of the settlement? In this regard, it is important to note that the WDR also incorporated the notion

Hoddie, “Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 2 (April 2003): 318-332; Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* (Johns Hopkins University Press 1986); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge University Press 1991); Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems* (Oxford University Press 1994); Arend Lijphart, “Consociational Democracy,” *World Politics* 21, no. 2 (1969): 207-225; Ian Lustick, “Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consociationalism versus Control,” *World Politics* 31, no. 3 (April 1979): 325-344.

³ Charles Call, *Why Peace Fails: the Causes and Prevention of Civil War Recurrence* (Georgetown University Press 2012): 99.

⁴ Jack A. Goldstone, Robert H. Bates, David L. Epstein, Ted Robert Gurr, Michael B. Lustik, Monty G. Marshall, Jay Ulfelder, and Mark Woodward, “A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability,” *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 1 (January 2010): 190-208.

⁵ Ted Robert Gurr, Mark Woodward, and Monty G. Marshall, “Forecasting Instability: Are Ethnic Wars and Muslim Countries Different?”

⁶ Stephen J. Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars: the Implementation of Peace Agreements* (Lynne Rienner 2002); Philip Roeder and Donald Rothchild, eds, *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy after Civil War* (Cornell University Press 2005); Michael Brown, ed, *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Belfer Center 1996).

that some forms of exclusion not only may not threaten political stability, but may be necessary for stability. This argument draws on a line of literature about ‘spoilers’ and similar dynamics.⁷

12. To sum up: inclusion matters, but how much? And of what type, under what conditions? And to what degree can various forms of inclusion compensate for institutional weaknesses during the longer period it will take to develop and deepen institutional capacities. These are just some of the questions that these studies leave unanswered. They form the basis for a research agenda set out herein.

13. What can outside actors do about this? From preliminary work in an adjacent study, we found initial evidence of five modes of influence, as follows:

- Direct support to government, and policy engagement to influence the decision-making of government elites on issues of inclusion and development;
- Support to opposition groups and civil society actors, to increase their ability to make their own claims for inclusion in the political settlement;
- Creating normative space: investing in research, or public debate, around issues like minority rights, to increase pressure on established elites;
- Direct mediation between parties (often through diplomatic rather than developmental arms of government), which may draw on financial and capacity-building support to national mediation or dialogue processes (often through developmental tools);
- Coercive strategies designed to compel government elites to adopt more inclusive or development-friendly strategies, or forego specific exclusive or abusive policies.

14. It is important to note here that the salience of this issue is not just for development actors, but governments as a whole. A focus on development actors alone is insufficient; foreign and defense ministries are equally important actors on this issue, and in some cases may have more directly relevant tools to bring to bear. The impact of political settlements on development strategies in fragile states is a genuinely whole of government question, especially when governments have a focus on stability as a goal of policy engagement.

⁷ Stephen J. Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 5-53; Barbara Walter, “The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,” *International Organization* 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 335-364.

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Backdrop: Why a focus on political settlements?

15. Many development agencies have made fragile states a priority for their work.⁸ The logic for this is clear: no fragile state has yet met a single MDG, or is on track to do so, and a substantial portion of the world's remaining absolute poor live in fragile states. (Another significant section in conflict-affected regions of lower middle or middle income countries.)⁹

16. Fragile states pose unique developmental challenges. Among these are weak political and economic institutions. Even more complicating, most fragile states have a recent history of internal violence, often civil war. The risk that these states will experience new bouts of war is increasing; of new civil wars in the 2000s, fully 90% were in countries that had experienced a prior civil war (compared to 67% in the previous decade, 62% in the 1980s and 57% in the 1970s.)¹⁰

Violence Often Recurs

Decade	Violence onsets in countries with no previous conflict (%)	Violence onsets in countries with a previous conflict (%)	Number of onsets
1960s	57	43	35
1970s	43	57	44
1980s	38	62	39
1990s	33	67	81
2000s	10	90	39

Source: World Development Report 2011, Walter 2010

17. War recurrence clearly poses a risk to development in fragile states. Many such states are now caught in cycles of repeated violence. And poverty data reveal that while poverty is declining for much of the world, countries affected by violence are lagging; for every three years a country is affected by major violence poverty reduction lags behind by 2.7 percentage points.¹¹

18. Yet some fragile states have escaped this pattern of recurring war and have moved onto a more stable trajectory – Mozambique and Nicaragua are but two examples. Others, like Ethiopia and Rwanda, are at an earlier stage of post-conflict development, and the question of whether they will be able to maintain the political stability necessary for continued development success is a vital one. In both cases, an initial post-war emphasis on carefully balancing stability and inclusive politics appears to be giving way to more exclusionary tendencies; if that constitutes a threat to stability, the development implications are substantial.

⁸ *Whole of Government Approaches to Fragile States* (OECD 2006); *Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: from Fragility to Resilience* (OECD 2008); Molly Elgin-Cossart and Bruce Jones, *Development in the Shadow of Violence* (2009).

⁹ There is not good data on exactly how many. The WDR 2011 referred to 1.5 billion people living in countries affected by violence, but that included LMICs and MICs affected by organized crime. A recent paper by Owen Barder (IDS/Ref) gives the geographical location of the world's remaining absolute poor; of the top 20 countries, 19 were fragile states or MICs affected by sub-national conflict. Further work is needed to determine in particular what percentage of the poor in MICs live in conflict-affected districts.

¹⁰ *WDR 2011*.

¹¹ *WDR 2011* [F1.3].

19. Yet for all of the literature on the causes of war, there is a paucity of research literature on successful recovery.¹² This is unsurprising; it is only now that there is a generation of post-Cold War cases of civil war that have ended conflict and sustained peace for more than a decade. This creates an important opportunity to shift the research focus from war onset towards two questions more relevant for a generation of states that have already experienced at least one bout of violence: what causes recurrence? And what are the ingredients or elements or conditions of a successful exit from violence?

20. In its examination of fragile states, the World Development Report 2011, *Conflict, Security and Development*, found that one important element was an ‘inclusive enough’ political settlement – that is, in essence, an agreement among elites about the allocation and distribution of power in the aftermath of violence. (The definition of political settlements is discussed in more detail below.) That finding built on prior scholarship that stressed the relationship between contested power sharing arrangements and conflict relapse¹³, and between elite pacting and stability.¹⁴ Indeed, so close was the correlation between inclusive settlements and successful exit from violence that the WDR postulated that such inclusive political settlements were foundational for the kind of institutional transformations necessary for longer-term, sustained development. (The claim is not that such settlements are sufficient for exit; the WDR treats them as probably necessary but insufficient foundations for successful exit from fragility.)

21. The purpose of this paper is to unpack and elucidate that claim, for which the evidence is so far only partial. Its related purpose is to propose a research agenda that can test and refine that claim.

22. If the claim has merit, it has real importance for both development agencies/departments and wider government policy. The developmental implications of better knowledge about how to avoid the recurrence of war in fragile states are clear. So too are the implications for building stability overseas – although internal wars in small states may not pose direct challenges to international actors, they certainly can pose challenges for regional security and spillover into more salient states. A sub-set of fragile states pose a security challenge in their own right¹⁵ (e.g. Somalia.)

23. To address the question we take the following steps. First, we briefly summarize the debate on causes of conflict and recovery, simply to locate the discussion of political settlements. Second, we explore the different and contested definitions of the term, and propose a refinement of existing definitions to narrow the research. Third, we unpack the argument that *inclusive* political settlements

¹² There is a broad literature on peacebuilding; but little of it is methodologically rigorous in its treatment of causation. Important exceptions include Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations* (Princeton University Press 2006); Doyle and Sambanis, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis,” *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 4 (December 2000): 779-801; Elizabeth M. Cousens and Chetan Kumar, *Peacebuilding as Politics: Cultivating Peace in Fragile Societies* (Lynne Reiner 2001); Anthony Oberschall, *Conflict and Peace Building in Divided Societies: Responses to Ethnic Violence* (Routledge 2007). There is good reason for the lack so far of rigorous treatment of successful exit: until recently, there was not a sufficient body of cases where enough time has elapsed to form confident judgments about continued stability.

¹³ Barbara Walter, “Bargaining Failures and Civil War,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (Spring 2009): 243-261; Barbara Walter, “Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War,” *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 371-388; Roy Licklider, “The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993,” *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 3 (September 1995): 681-690; Robert Harrison Wagner, “The Causes of Peace,” *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (NYU Press 1993): 235-268.

¹⁴ Caroline A. Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, *Crafting Peace: Power-Sharing Institutions and the Negotiated Settlement of Civil Wars* (Steven Stedman, Donald Rothchild and Elizabeth Cousens, *Ending Civil Wars* (Pennsylvania State University 2007); Lyne Rienner 2002); Stefan Lindemann, “Inclusive Elite Bargains and the Dilemmas of Unproductive Peace: Evidence from Zambia,” (GSRDC 2010).

¹⁵ For a discussion of the evidence of the links between fragile states and other security risks, see in particular Stewart Patrick, *Weak Links: Fragile States, Global Threats and International Security*. (Oxford: OUP 2011).

are more stable than exclusive ones. And fourth, we outline a research agenda that would test and refine that claim.

What causes war, and what causes relapse: a brief summary

24. This is not the place for a full debate on the causes of internal war; but a brief summary will help to locate the discussion of political settlements.

25. First, and critically, violence should not be assumed to be an irrational or emotive response – for many actors in many settings, violence is a *rational* choice of strategy.¹⁶ It is, for example, perfectly rational to adopt a violent posture if you believe that you or your identity group may be subject to violence by an opposing group; such calculations can be an important motivator for group violence.¹⁷ Moreover, every sub-group is aware that every other sub-group is making similar calculations – and so risk-avoidance may suggest moving first to pick up weapons and organize for self-defense, a move that will seem threatening to another group, causing them also to organize for war.¹⁸ History is replete with examples of wars that start unintentionally as one group moves to defend themselves from a possible attack by the state or another group, causing the state or the opposing group in turn to move towards violence. This kind of “security dilemma” can contribute to the outbreak of war, including internal war where the state is too weak to guarantee security or efficiently suppress incipient rebellion.¹⁹

26. Second, in a given setting, any one of a number of factors can motivate political leaders/entrepreneurs to pursue a violent strategy. Those factors can be political in basis: the exclusion of an ethnic or religious or territorial group from the trappings of power can create powerful motivations to challenge the existing order, including through violence.²⁰ They can be security oriented: minority groups can fear (or actually experience) persecution or oppression, and turn to arms to redress the situation. External security factors – including the threat of invasion and spillover factors like cross-border militants, equipment, resources, criminal networks, finances, and refugees – can also trigger violence.²¹ Motives can also be economic: if marginal groups are blocked

¹⁶ Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton University Press 1975); Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge University Press 2003); Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge University Press 2008); Erich Weede and Edward N. Muller, “Rebellion, Violence and Revolution: A Rational Choice Perspective,” *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 1 (January 1998): 43-59; Chaim Kaufmann, “Rational Choice and Progress in the Study of Ethnic Conflict: A Review Essay,” *Security Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 178-207.

¹⁷ Rui JP de Figueiredo and Barry R. Weingast, “The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict, in *Civil Wars, Insecurity and Intervention*, eds. Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder (Columbia University Press 1999).

¹⁸ Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis, “Civil War and the Security Dilemma,” *Civil Wars, Insecurity and Intervention*, eds. Barbara Walter and Jack Snyder (Columbia University Press 1999); Barbara F. Walter, “The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,” *International Organization* 51 (1997): 335-364.

¹⁹ Barbara Walter, “Designing Transitions from Civil War: Demobilization, Democratization and Commitments to Peace,” *International Security* 24, no. 1 (Summer 1999): 127-155; Barbara Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil War* (Princeton University Press 2002).

²⁰ Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie, “Institutionalizing Peace: Power sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 2 (April 2003): 318-332; Donald Rothchild, “Ethnic Bargaining and the Management of Intense Conflict,” *International Negotiation* 2, no. 1 (1997): 1-20; Caroline Hartzell and Donald Rothchild, “Political Pacts as Negotiated Agreements: Comparing Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Cases,” *International Negotiation* 2, no. 1 (1997): 147-171; Caroline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie and Donald Rothchild, “Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: an Investigation of Some Key Variables,” *International Organization* 55 (2001): 183-208;

²¹ Brown 1996; Margarita P. Gomez and Asger Christensen, “The Impacts of Refugees on Neighboring Countries: A Development Challenge,” background paper for the WDR 2011 (2010); Kristian Skrede

from accessing a state's budget and the private sector is limited and controlled, powerful economic incentives exist to challenge the existing order – amplified when the state has significant natural resources.²² The calculations and motivations that trigger war are usually primarily internal, but they can be amplified, manipulated, supported or restrained by regional and external dynamics.²³ Efforts to find single-variable causes of internal war have not been successful.

27. Third, weak institutions are unable to provide peaceful and durable resolution to these stress factors, and create the conditions whereby violence is a rational choice for pursuing claims. The causal mechanism for this is clear: where political and accountability institutions are strong, challenges to the existing order can often be accommodated through political dialogue, legal action, non-violent civil strife, or similar; but when institutions are weak, lack of confidence in the ability of institutions to resolve claims increases the incentives for violence, while a calculation that weak security services are unlikely to be able to successfully repress opposition decrease the obstacles to rebellion. Fearon has found that weak financial, administrative and coercive capacities are a better predictor of the onset of civil war and extreme violence than other aspects, including economic predation, political grievances, and ethnic inclusion. However, the data here is of a poor quality, and so such findings should be treated as interim.²⁴

28. The research literature is weak on two additional factors that practitioners consistently find to be strongly relevant to war and peace dynamics: leadership, and legitimacy. Legitimacy is a complex issue, poorly understood in the research literature about conflict and development, yet evidently important to the political dynamics of states. An important part of the research agenda on conflict and development is to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of legitimacy – including, vitally, non-western forms of legitimacy such as revolutionary legitimacy, or embedded/historical legitimacy²⁵ – and the manner in which it plays into causes of conflict and of recovery. Leadership, too, is given weak treatment in the research literature, but few if any practitioner accounts of conflict dynamics do not give it a major role. A better understanding of leadership – and in particular of the kinds of social dynamics that facilitate certain forms of leadership – is also important for a research agenda.

29. The causes of any *specific* war emerge from this complex mix of motivations, regional/international dynamics, weak institutions and leadership/legitimacy issues. In one way, this is an unsatisfying outcome: far more re-assuring to find a single cause (inequality; ethnicity; natural resources; rain) to explain fragility and war. Common sense, though, tells us that phenomena as

Gleditsch, "Transnational Dimensions of Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 3 (May 2007): 293-309; James D. Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February 2003): 75-90; Idean Saleyhan and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War," *International Organization* 60 (2006): 335-368; Idean Saleyhan, "No Shelter Here: Rebel Sanctuaries and International Conflict," *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (January 2008): 54-66; Paul Collier et. Al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (The World Bank 2003); Cassidy Craft and Joseph P. Smaldone, "The Arms Trade and the Incidence of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1967-1997," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 6 (November 2002): 693-710.

²² For example, Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4: 563-595; Berdal and David M. Malone, eds, *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil War* (Lynne Rienner 2000); Michael L. Ross, "How do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases," *International Organization* 58 (2004): 35-67; MacArtan Humphreys, "Natural Resources, Conflict and Conflict Resolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 1 (August 2005): 508-537.

²³ See, for example, James Fearon and David Laitin, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?" *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 275-302; Auty 2001; de Soysa 2000; Jan Svensson, "Foreign aid and rent-seeking," *Journal of International Economics* 51 (2000): 437-461.

²⁴ James Fearon, "Civil War Onset," Background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010).

²⁵ Bruce Jones and Rahul Chandran, *From Fragility to Resilience: Concepts and Dilemmas of Statebuilding in Fragile States* (OECD 2008).

complex as war and fragility should have complex causes, and that these should vary considerably from case to case – and that is what the science increasingly tells us too.²⁶

30. The causes of war recurrence may be very similar to the causes of initial war onset, but there are complicating factors. From the established research literature, the story line of recurrence is in three parts:

31. First, whatever set of factors engendered conflict in the first place are likely to remain and intensify with violence. If security fears triggered violence, the reality of conflict exacerbates and confirms those fears.²⁷ If political or ethnic discrimination motivated violence, acts of war intensify a sense of difference and enmity.²⁸ If economic factors are to blame, they are likely to worsen – violence often provides opportunities for predatory entrepreneurship, and it can be hard to convince people that they can profit as much from peace as from predation²⁹, though they often can.³⁰

32. Second, whatever else has happened, at least two groups that command sizeable portions of the population will have proven to one another, beyond all doubt, that they are willing to use violence to deny the other their claims or demands or rights. Even once a ceasefire or peace agreement has been reached, rational analysis by the other side tells them that its possible – not certain, but *possible* – that their former opponents could at any point return to violence.³¹ (And violence amplifies irrational views, often through acts of brutality that reinforce perceptions of ancient enmity, atavistic hatreds, etc.³²) Each side knows this about the other. The rational decision for both sides is thus to retain the option to return to violence – and in many cases, the rational decision is to take violent action preemptively.³³ This “commitment gap” or “trust deficit” is a powerful explanation for why many ceasefires or peace agreements fail – roughly 3 out of 4 times.³⁴

33. Third, whatever the state of institutions before violence, they are likely to be worse after it. Institutions fail to maintain political relations; security institutions palpably fail to provide security at a national level, and prey on the populace. Leaders and officials flee or are killed, reducing human

²⁶ Indeed, there is a long tradition of literature that looks to complex causes of war. Exemplars include Stedman 1994; Brown 1996; James D. Fearon, “Rationalist Explanations for War,” *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 379-414. More recent quantitative literature includes Fearon 2003; James Vreeland, “The Effect of Political Regime on Civil War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 1 (June 2008): 401-425; Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler, “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War,” *Oxford Economic Papers* 61 (2009): 1-27; Gudrin Ostby, Clionadh Raleigh, and Havard Hegre, “Poverty and Civil War Events: A Disaggregated Study of Sierra Leone,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4: 298-623.

²⁷ Stephen Stedman 1996; Brown 1996; Fearon 2003; Walter 1999; Snyder and Jervis 1999.

²⁸ Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (University of California 1985); Donald Horowitz, “Structure and Strategy in Ethnic Conflict: A Few Steps Towards Synthesis” (World Bank 1998); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Touchstone 1997); Barbara Walter, “The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,” *International Organization* 51 (1997): 335-364; Stuart J. Kaufman, “Escaping the Symbolic Politics Trap: Reconciliation Initiatives and Conflict Resolution in Ethnic Wars,” *Journal of Peace research* 43, no. 2 (March 2006): 201-218.

²⁹ Berdal and Malone 2010; Collier and Hoefler 2010.

³⁰ Jeffrey Herbst, “Economic Incentives, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa,” *Journal of African Economies* 9 (2000): 270-294.

³¹ Robert Powell, “War as a Commitment Problem,” *International Organization* 60 (2006): 169-203; Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 27-47; Walter 1999, Fearon 1994.

³² Stathis N. Kalivas, “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence’: Action and Identity in Civil Wars,” *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 3 (September 2003): 475-494;

³³ Stuart J. Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War,” *International Security* 21, no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 108-138; Kaufman 1998; Walter 1999, 2004; de Figueireda and Weingast 1999; Posen 1993.

³⁴ Virginia Page Fortna, *Peace Time: Cease-Fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace* (Princeton University Press 2004).

capacity. Physical damage may also be extensive. Since weak institutions are a strong indicator of conflict onset, the deleterious effect of violence on institutions becomes a negative cycle – arguably, a violence trap.³⁵

34. A further factor in political settlements that follow episodes of violence is organized crime. Protracted episodes of internal violence often create opportunities for armed groups to engage in illicit commercial activity, sometimes to fund rebellion, sometimes as a side activity. The end of violence and the elaboration of a political agreement that includes the leaders of a rebellion may not constitute sufficient incentive for them to end their illicit commercial activity, or sub-groups that do not profit deeply from the settlement may break away – Northern Ireland is a prominent case in point. Moreover, weak but nevertheless semi-stable political settlements may create conditions conducive to organized crime – organized criminal groups may avoid circumstances of all-out war but take advantage of weak security structures and fluid political conditions to penetrate post-conflict settings – e.g. Guinea-Bissau. (It should be stressed that evidence about organized crime is sharply limited and the knowledge base about the relationship between organized crime and conflict is in its infancy.)³⁶

35. In short, once a country with weak institutions has gone down a route of internal violence, sustained exit is hard. This may explain why states often go through repeated cycles of violence.

36. Together, these factors suggest the logic that inclusive political settlements are relevant for sustaining an end to violence. If a group is excluded from political settlement, all of the security, political or economic logics that drove them to war in the first place risks remain in place. Inclusive political settlements can be seen as a (partial) substitute for efficient formal institutions – if they are inclusive, participating groups and sub-groups can have some degree of confidence about their ability to achieve security, economic and political claims within the settlement, thus diminishing the logic of violence. (From a game theoretic perspective: opponents in a civil war are in a form of single-iteration ‘prisoners’ dilemma’ game, for which there’s no reward for cooperation; the challenge is to move them into a repeated prisoners dilemma game, for which there is at least a potential reward for cooperation – this is the function of institutions, and in their absence, of structured political settlements.)³⁷

Political settlements – what are they?

37. But what, exactly, is a political settlement?

38. There are two quite distinct ways of thinking about political settlements. One approach is oriented towards informal, long-running dynamics between political actors, especially elites. Another is focused on specific, often formal renegotiations of political arrangements – through power-sharing deals, constitutional conferences, peace agreements and the like. Each approach has its merits in substantive terms.

39. The 2011 World Development Report, took a ‘peace agreements plus’ approach – in other words, a substantial focus of the analysis of political settlements was on peace agreements *and their implementation* (which sometimes differs substantially from paper agreements), but the term was used also to cover other discrete episodes of political renegotiation among elites. Power-sharing

³⁵ Barbara Walter, “Conflict Relapse and the Sustainability of Post-Conflict Peace,” background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010).

³⁶ For a review of the literature, see Camino Kavanagh, “State Capture and Organized Crime or Capture of Organized Crime by the State”, <http://www.cic.nyu.edu/peacebuilding/docs/Lima%20Seminar%20Background%20Paper.pdf>

³⁷ Lant Prichett and Frauke de Weijer, “Fragile States: Stuck in a Capability Trap,” background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010).

arrangements negotiated after limited episodes of political violence (such as in Kenya in 2008, or in Yemen in 2011) or after mass public demonstrations (as in Lebanon after the Cedar Revolution) were viewed by the WDR as sharing important characteristics with post-war settlements; so too leadership changes and shifts in the balance of power that follow political assassinations (as in Pakistan after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto) or the death of prominent leaders (as with the renegotiation of power distribution arrangements in South Sudan following the death of John Garang.) The use of strategic appointments by government elites to bring in former opponents was particularly relevant in cases of one-sided military victory (Rwanda, Nicaragua.)

40. Other practitioners have focused on longer-running processes. Among the broadest definitions in use is that of DfID: “the expression of a common understanding, usually forged between elites, about how power is organised and exercised.”³⁸ That builds on a prior definition by Alan Whites: his fuller discussion of the concept provides a useful grounding: “the structures of the state are determined by an underlying political settlement; ‘the forging of a common understanding, usually among elites, that their interests or beliefs are served by a particular way of organising political power.’ A political settlement may survive for centuries, but within that time decision making power is likely to transfer among elite groups as individual governments come and go.”

41. Another way of thinking about these approaches is to examine variations across two dimensions. The first is temporal: is a political settlement a defined event, or an ongoing process? The second relates to actors: is a political settlement simply an agreement among elites, or does it incorporate broader questions of state/society relations?

42. On the temporal question, there are merits and demerits of both approaches. From a research perspective, discrete temporal events such as constitutional conferences and power-sharing agreements are easier to locate and examine. More fluid approaches, by contrast, can be difficult to isolate from the normal thrust of political negotiations and maneuvering. On the other hand, in practice few if any peace agreements or power-sharing arrangements or similar are static; they are constantly being renegotiated, at least within some limits, in response to events, deaths of critical actors, and changing pressures.³⁹

43. This question is linked to the question of how conflict itself is viewed within the process of state formation. For some scholars and practitioners, war or conflict should be viewed as a radical break from other forms of politics; for example, one of the most literate and experienced practitioners of civil war management, Jean-Marie Guehenno, has argued that civil war should be viewed as the complete breakdown of the state-society contract, and that post-conflict political negotiations have to understand that backdrop (Guehenno/CIC). We take a slightly different view; that the history of state formation in most contemporary fragile states – and indeed in most states, if one takes the long historical view – is one of contest and violence and negotiation iterated over time. (Jones et al OECD). Not for nothing does the most widely cited historian of state formation start with the concept that “war makes the state, and the state makes war.” (Tilly 1985). In the case of contemporary fragile states, many of the civil wars that ended in the 1990s and 2000s began immediately after the end of colonial rule; thus, for many of today’s fragile states they knew no period of a stable, peaceful state-society relationship since the late 1800s until the negotiation of peace agreements after, in many cases, thirty years of continuous or near continuous civil war.

44. Thus, our orientation is towards longer-running concepts of political settlement and re-settlement through and after violence. However, from a research perspective it is evident that a focus on the discrete agreements that punctuate that long-running process – peace agreements, power-

³⁸ *Building Peaceful States and Societies: a DFID Practice Paper* (2010).

³⁹ There are communication challenges to both approaches too: peer reviews of earlier drafts reacted to narrow definitions by noting that they found few differences between the concept of political settlements and that of peace agreements; and reacted to broad definitions by noting a difficulty in distinguishing political settlements from more familiar general concepts of political arrangements.

sharing arrangements, constitutional conferences, etc. – can help to ground a research agenda. And these events surely do constitute important moments when long-structured relations can be shifted – thus, important moments to address the question of inclusion. A productive approach is to locate those punctuating agreements but understand them as part of a longer process of contestation and state formation.

45. This brings us to the second question: is the settlement (and the question of how inclusive the settlement) just about elites, or also about wider social groupings?

46. Here too there is a definitional debate, with some scholars/practitioners focusing on elites, and others on wider state/society relations. A widely cited study that takes a more explicitly broad view of elite/social relations is that of Di John and Putzel, whose definition also reflects a long historical process by which state-society relations are forged, challenged and re-forged, sometimes through violence: “the balance or distribution of power between contending social groups and classes, on which any state is based.”⁴⁰ Similarly, Fritz & Rocha Menocal treat political settlements as “the expression of a negotiated agreement... binding together state and society and providing the necessary legitimacy for those who govern over those who are ruled.”⁴¹

47. The distinction between narrow and broad concepts of political settlement is often elided. The WDR 2011, for example, moves loosely between formulations that emphasize elite inclusion and formulations that emphasize broader citizen participation.

48. Here it is important to note that the literature on political settlements relates to a wider literature on ‘elite pacts’, which focuses on the relationships between elites after periods of turmoil. Weingast defines elite pacts as “agreements among competing (and often warring) elites that initiate a transition to democracy.”⁴² Higley and Burton refer to “elite settlements” as “sudden, deliberate, and lasting compromises of core disputes among political elites.... After settlements, elite persons and groups continue to be affiliated with conflicting parties, movements, and beliefs, but they share a consensus about government institutions and the codes and rules of political competition.”⁴³ O’Donnell & Schmitter and Przeworski argue that elite pacts represent both formal agreements and informal arrangements to limit competition.⁴⁴ “Elite pacts” is a concept that runs throughout the state-building process, not necessarily linked to violence. Political settlements forged in the wake of violence, or to prevent it, should be seen as a distinct sub-set of elite pacts.

49. Of course, elite pacts and broader social compacts are not entirely distinct phenomenon, as most citizen participation in political discourse happens through a variety of forms of political representatives or other elites. So elite inclusion may carry with it broader forms of citizen participation or at least broader group recognition that their interests are reflected in a given settlement. Was the appointment of Hutu elites to significant district government positions by the Tutsi-dominated RPF, in post-genocide Rwanda, an act of elite inclusion, or an act of re-assurance to the broader Hutu population?⁴⁵ Surely both.

⁴⁰ Jonathan di John and James Putzel, *Political Settlements* (Governance and Social Development Resources Center 2009).

⁴¹ Verena Fritz and Alina Rocha Menocal, *Understanding State-Building from a Political Economy Perspective*, ODI (2007): 27.

⁴² Barry R. Weingast, “The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of Law,” *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 2 (June 1997): 245-263.

⁴³ John Higley and Michael Burton, “Elite Settlements and the Taming of Politics,” *Government and Opposition* 33, no. 1 (January 1998): 98-115.

⁴⁴ Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (John Hopkins University Press 1986); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (Cambridge University Press 1991).

⁴⁵ Omar McDoom, “Rwanda’s Exit Pathway from Violence: A Strategic Assessment,” background paper for *The World Development Report 2011* (2010).

50. Whaites, reviewing the elite pacting and statebuilding literature, reaches similar conclusions. He argues: “Elites are prominent within the literature on statebuilding, but elites can rarely take social constituencies for granted, they must maintain an ability to organise, persuade, command or inspire. Wider societies are not bystanders in political settlements or state-building.” We largely agree; but note that there are sometimes a sub-set of elites, particularly economic elites, that are largely abstracted from broader social groupings and who may well be able to profit and reinforce their position by reference only to economic deals with the state and external actors, freeing them to broadly ignore local social dynamics.

51. Moreover, we know less than we should about the different patterns of elite/social relationships within the context of violence. There is an important agenda here of marrying the research literature on how elites emerge, and what forms of social mobilization facilitate which kinds of leadership, with the specific circumstances of violence. One important critique of both the WDR 2011 and much of the recent OECD work on statebuilding is that it does too little to elucidate the relationship between elites and broader social groupings, to understand thereby the extent to which elite pacts or other versions of elite settlements actually represent broader political forces, or are abstracted from them. It would be helpful, for example, to adapt the work by Khan (1996, 1998) on the differences between patron-client relationships in advanced democracies and developing countries to the specific circumstances of violence in fragile states; and to elaborate initial work by Gauri (2007) on the ways different social dynamics (including across generations) shape which elites gain prominence.

52. This is not just a definitional question, but a research agenda. Take the question of the stability of power-sharing arrangements. Are those that incorporate explicit mechanisms for state/society interaction (e.g. through elections) more stable than those that do not? There is at best mixed evidence here. We do know that elections that follow peace agreements after civil wars are conflict-prone.⁴⁶ But further empirical research is needed to refine this finding, and to relate it to a wider set of political settlements.

53. Given the ongoing debate between time-specific versus historical approaches, and between a focus on elites versus an approach that is oriented to state-society relations, we believe that a research agenda should start with a definition that balances these concerns. One such is that adopted by the OECD, which defines a political settlement as an “agreement, *principally* between elites, on the balance and distribution of power and wealth, on the rules of political engagement and on the nature of the political process that connect state and society.”⁴⁷ This definition is oriented towards a time-specific agreement – whether that be a peace agreement, a transition pact, or similar – but incorporates a reference to the longer-running processes that such agreements punctuate. In conflict and post-conflict cases, it clearly overlaps with the peace agreements, but is also wider than it. It also has the advantage of making an explicit reference to the distribution of wealth. DfID’s definitions focus on political power, or political process, and that is of course at the core of things; but the explicit distribution of wealth can be an important part of buy-off mechanisms, or for the distribution of spoils. This can be accomplished within political structures – the decision to offer to Sierra Leone’s former rebel leader the in-government position of “Minister for Mines” was a fairly thinly veiled means of buying off potential opposition within a power structure.⁴⁸ Sometimes even more explicit wealth distribution claims (privileged contracts, positions at the head of parastatal corporations, etc.)

⁴⁶ Terrence Lyons, “The Role of Postsettlement Elections,” in *Implementations of Peace Agreements*, eds. Stephen John Stedman, David Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens; Stephen John Stedman, *Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Lessons and Recommendations for Policymakers* (IPA Policy Paper Series on Peace Implementation 2001); Anna K. Jarstad, “Post-Accord Elections and Armed Conflict,” *The Democratization Project: Opportunities and Challenges*, eds. Ashok Swain, Ramses Amer, and Joakim Ojendal (Wimbledon Publishing 2009).

⁴⁷ *International Support to Statebuilding in Situations of Fragility and Conflict*, OECD (2010).

⁴⁸ Paul Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy” (World Bank 2006).

are part of political settlements among elites, and the distributional benefits of those arrangements to different segments of society can be seen as part of a renegotiation of state/society relations.

54. Finally, we believe that there is merit, in research terms at least, in focusing in on that sub-set of political settlements that are forged or re-forged in the aftermath of violence or in the face of the imminent threat of violence. (Research processes should of course control for political settlements not forged in these conditions.) Now, just above, we signaled our view that war should not be treated as such a totally distinct phenomenon from other parts of contested histories of state formation in fragile states. But the argument is not that violence is not a very particular form of social process; it is rather that violence is much more commonly present in the process of state formation than most contemporary development policy suggests. Indeed, we continue to be surprised during field interactions by the extent to which violence and conflict are treated as phenomenon outside the sphere of development, despite the near-omni-presence of violence, oppression, occupation, and war in the contemporary histories of most fragile states.

55. Thus, a precise – if heavy-handed – formulation for research purposes could build off of the OECD definition but incorporate the focus on violence (and a more explicit link to longer-running process of historical contestation); thus:

An agreement, principally between elites, but often connected to social groupings, on the balance and distribution of power and wealth, on the rules of political engagement and on the nature of the longer-running and contested political process that connect state and society.

And we suggest a specific research focus, for fragile states, on those moments of punctuation that come in the aftermath of violence or in the face of the imminent threat of violence.

The question of typologies.

56. The issues of elite/social and discrete/continuous suggest a two-by-two typology of political settlements. However, in the course of this study, we became wary of typologies. DfID has constructed one such typology with five types: engineered settlements, informal elite pacts, imposed settlements, entrenched settlements, and inclusive settlements. The first problem with the DfID categorization is that settlements are classified according to varying criteria, which results in overlaps. For example, some settlements are classified according to how they are reached (engineered and imposed; some by how they are negotiated -- formally or informally (engineered vs informal elite pacts); the degree of inclusivity, and their durability (entrenched). But these are not distinct categories: it is possible for a settlement to be simultaneously 'entrenched' and 'inclusive', for example. Just as easily it could 'entrenched' and 'engineered'. The second problem is that the categorization does not provide for any variation in the type of state in which the settlement is embedded – but there are important distinctions between states at the very poorest end of human development and those with somewhat greater resources; between truly non-institutionalized societies and those with a limited set of institutions; between states with a long historical identity and those that are newer creations; and so on. It also confuses features with outcomes: for example, it treats 'responsive to public expectations' as a feature, rather than an outcome. Finally, it builds in a normative bias towards political inclusion, treating 'inclusive political settlements' as separate from 'responsive to public expectations', where an exclusive political settlement might well be responsive to publics – think of Singapore from the 1970s to the present.

57. There are other variables that matter. For example, categorizing trends in governance captures the distinction between political settlements in the process of recovering and consolidating, and those that are responding to crises or an erosion of arrangements. There are important historical variations – there is a difference between adapting arrangements in historical kingdoms than in authoritarian states (a difference that we have seen play out, for example, in the difference between the way in which the Sunni Kingdoms have responded to demands for change arising from the 'Arab Spring'

than have Sunni authoritarian states.) There are differences, too, in the formative event – between political settlements forged on the back of a military victory versus those that emerge from a negotiated settlement, or political settlements adapted after episodes of public rioting or political assassination. Other variables that may matter are the length of conflict; the quantity of time that has passed since the end of the last major bout of violence (there is a difference between a political settlement forged immediately after a war, in the form of a peace agreement, and a political settlement re-forged three, five, or ten years later). Moreover, typologies tend to reinforce a sense of binary opposition, when of course there are varying degrees of victory/consent, and within the category ‘negotiated settlement’ there is substantial variation in the scale, coherence, quality, military capability and regional support to various challenging groups.

58. Our conclusion, thus, is that typologies are not the right way to think about the problem; rather, the better option is to construct a qualitative assessment, case by case, of the degree to which the political settlement is vulnerable to relapse to conflict, based on the level of inclusion in the specific case. We develop a list of such questions in the adjacent study (CIC Study 2.)

What is the case for arguing that inclusion matters?

59. Policy has increasingly highlighted the importance of *inclusion* for sustained peace and development. DFID’s peacebuilding/statebuilding framework, *Building Peaceful States and Societies* states:

Political settlements define how political and economic power is organized. Exclusionary settlements are more likely to lead to instability. Supporting inclusive settlements means understanding the incentives of the elites and identifying when and how to empower different actors to push for a broader settlement. Peace processes provide windows of opportunity to reshape existing settlements, but may not address underlying power dynamics. Support to democratic and political processes can help promote more inclusive decision-making.⁴⁹

How strong is the empirical evidence for these arguments?

60. It is worth noting that the OECD has reached similar conclusions. It’s policy studies have concluded that “The overarching priority of state building must be a form of political governance and the articulation of a set of political processes or accountability mechanisms through which the state and society reconcile their expectations of one another”⁵⁰, and that “For a state to be perceived as legitimate, it is crucial that a political process exists that creates space for debate and dialogue among power elites and includes all major political forces.”⁵¹ These claims draw on a growing body of literature that applies statebuilding theory and the history of contested statebuilding to the contemporary experience of fragile states.⁵² Studies of statebuilding in Papua New Guinea and Indonesia by Francis Fukuyama, and comparative studies by Clare Lockhart and Ashraf Ghani have been particularly influential in this regard. The OECD has also argued that “the participation of the

⁴⁹ DFID 2010 p. 7.

⁵⁰ OECD, *From Fragility to Resilience*

⁵¹ Katia Papagianni, “Participation and State Legitimation,” in *Building States to Build Peace*, eds Charles T. Call and Vanessa Wyeth (Lynne Rienner 2008).

⁵² Fukuyama 2004; Ghani and Lockhart 2008; Chesterman, Ignatieff and Thakur 2005; Call 2008; Brinkerhoff 2007; Barnett 2006; Stewart et al 2006; Keating and Knight 2004; Whitman 1999.

public in the statebuilding process may also contribute to the legitimacy of the state...⁵³, but the evidence base for this is less developed.

61. Three recent mixed-method studies works have found more empirical evidence pointing to inclusion as an important factor in escaping cycles of violence and poverty. The idea that ‘inclusive-enough’ settlements matter for recovery was a central conclusion of the 2011 World Development Report on conflict, security and development. Earlier studies also found evidence that pointed to elite inclusion as the main factor driving ethnic strife and civil war, because failure to include elites from other groups incentivizes them to foment rebellion.⁵⁴ Charles Call has similar findings in his book *Why Peace Fails*, but even more to the point finds that inclusion or exclusion is the most powerful variable for explaining war recurrence – i.e. the phenomenon of relapse back into violence after a peace agreement is signed and endures for at least an initial period.⁵⁵ The Political Instability Task Force has found reinforcing evidence. Each of these is developed here.

62. As the WDR began its inquiry, the team turned its attention to a question that has until late received little attention in the conflict literature: what is it that has allowed some post-conflict states *not* to relapse. In other words, why does peace endure in some settings? The focus in the literature has been on the predominance of relapse; less attention has been paid to the question of the causal mechanisms that allow some post-conflict societies to weather the inevitable bumps in the road of implementation of peace agreements or post-victory settlements.

63. To focus attention on the question, the WDR commissioned in-depth case studies of older cases (Germany, France, and Poland after WWII; the US post-civil war⁵⁶), more recent cases like Rwanda⁵⁷, and multi-case study comparing successful cases of exit (Vietnam, Rwanda, South Africa, Mozambique and Cambodia).⁵⁸ (These studies were peer reviewed by the World Bank’s DEC research team, as well as by panels of external scholars.) The comparison of exit pathways threw up a series of interesting conclusions, among them:

- The initial form of settlement heavily shapes the pathways via which a country emerges from violent conflict but it does not ultimately determine the outcomes in terms of political and institutional formation/configuration and regime type.
- The existence of substantial differences within nations (ethnic and economic inequalities) has not prevented the maintenance of stability. In fact, in the case countries, poverty and marginalised groups have been conspicuously used or actively managed using regime maintenance and state-society relations mechanisms, to the extent that they form a plausible part of overall consolidation.
- In the medium term, in all cases, a dominant party emerged that was able to reinvent itself as inclusive and/or democratic while it consolidated the regime through deepening hegemony, executive capability, and privileged patron-client networks.

⁵³ Papagianni 2008.

⁵⁴ Stefan Lindemann, *Do Inclusive Elite Bargains Matter? A Research Framework for Understanding the Causes of Civil War in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Governance and Social Development Resource Center 2008).

⁵⁵ Call 2012.

⁵⁶ “Out of Defeat: Germany, France and Poland post-WWII,” background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010); “Reconstruction: The American South 1865-1980,” background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010).

⁵⁷ McDoom 2010.

⁵⁸ Paula Cristina Roque, Judy Smith-Höhn, Paul-Simon Handy, David Craig; Contributors: Omar McDoom, Le Dang Doanh, “Exit Pathways: South Africa, Mozambique, Vietnam, Cambodia, Rwanda,” background paper for the *World Development Report 2011* (2010).

64. Particularly notable about these conclusions is that the held even in cases of successful exits where war had ended through one-sided military victory. In all but one of those cases, the victorious party had reached out to oppositional forces and offered them some form of participation or inclusion in governing processes, often through strategic appointments.

65. This was a potentially important corrective to a line of argument that has run in the civil war literature since the end of the Cold War, namely the ‘give war a chance’ argument (Lutwak 1999.) One of the strong findings in the literature has been that wars that end through military victory are less likely to relapse into conflict than wars that end through negotiated settlement. The presumed causal mechanism here is that defeated opponents cannot muster the political or military capacity to challenge ongoing government, or that having once failed they cannot convince a sufficiently large band of followers to back a second attempt. The comparative study of cases of successful exit suggested a third potential mechanism: that those who might have led a second or second stage rebellion were brought in or bought into the ruling coalition or otherwise into the machinery and spoils of government; and/or that defeated ‘communities’ saw in key strategic appointments reassurance that their interests would not be neglected under the post-conflict governing arrangements. The appointment by the victorious Rwandan People’s Front, once in government, of key Hutu figures to positions as governors of important Rwandan provinces was seen in these reassurance/confidence-building terms.⁵⁹

66. To examine this further, the WDR team re-ran its case review of all cases of civil war conclusion since the end of the Cold War. That examination looked at every case of internal or civil conflict that was extant by 1989, or that started afterwards, and coded against a wide range of criteria. For those that ended, we looked for evidence of either deliberate inclusion, or lack thereof – ranging everywhere from full-blown power-sharing to the use of strategic appointments to bring in opposition forces/leaders. That examination found that of cases that had ended through one-sided military victory, all but one case fell into one of two categories: the victorious party had engaged in some form of offering participation/inclusion to the opposition forces, and the settlement had endured; or they had not, and the settlement had collapsed back into a new round of conflict. (The chapter in which this argument was elaborated, Chapter 4, was peer reviewed on two occasions by the World Bank (DEC research team, and Bank-wide review), as well as by a panel of independent scholars, and was also discussed with the WDR Advisory Team, comprising scholars and practitioners.)

67. The one exception to the findings here was Angola (though it is worth noting that since the time that the WDR completed its work, a new rebel movement has begun to be active in Angola; how serious a threat to the settlement is thereby posed remains to be seen.) Simultaneously with the WDR’s work, the long-running civil war in Sri Lanka was brought to an end (after an interim period of a partial settlement) with a major victory by the government over the rebel Tamil Tigers, and so far neither has the government offered any form of inclusion to the defeated Tigers nor has that conflict relapsed into violence; but we are only two years out from the victory, so the real durability of the Sri Lankan victory remains to be seen.

68. In parallel to the WDR study, Charles Call at American University was conducting a study to address “why peace fails,” or why, following civil wars, countries experience a resurgence of violence.⁶⁰ (Call’s study was peer reviewed at American University, and by anonymous reviewers for publication.) In seeking to find causal patterns as to why civil wars have ended, Call uses three parallel methodologies: a quantitative analysis; an in-depth case study of Liberia; and a series of structured smaller case studies of another 14 cases of recurrence. In this rich study he finds: “one factor seems

⁵⁹ McDoom 2010.

⁶⁰ Note: At the time of the design of this study, Call was a CIC Non-Resident Fellow; he conducted the Nepal case study for the adjacent country-study; and contributed through discussion and written inputs into the initial phase of research and thinking about this preliminary concept study.

to play a more common causal role in civil war recurrence than others. This central finding is that *political exclusion*, rather than economic or social factors, plays the decisive role in most cases of civil war recurrence: Political exclusion acts as a trigger for renewed armed conflict. Conversely, *political inclusion*, including but not limited to power-sharing agreements, is highly correlated with consolidation of peace.⁶¹

69. Call argues:

... political exclusion here refers to processes rather than substantive policy outcomes. It refers to participation in political or policy processes: the opportunity either to compete in the electoral arena or to enjoy representation in appointed state offices. Political processes signify both the potential and the actual exercise of power, and thus they provide a means of attaining desired ends. Chief among these ends is security for the group and its adherents or associated populations. As such, participation in the security forces (military or police) is an especially important arena of state inclusionary or exclusionary behavior affecting the likelihood of subsequent violent conflict. It is especially perilous for post-conflict regimes to violate expectations about the ability of formerly armed and mobilized social groups to participate in the policing and defense of their own country or territory.

Second, political exclusion is contextually defined rather than measured by a single objective standard of participation. ... That is, exclusion refers here not to a globally applicable objective level of political participation but to subjective perceptions among former warring factions about whether the state engages in exclusion based on prior understandings that emerged from prior war termination. ... And these expectations are often heavily shaped by peace agreements, which serve as an initial indicator of minimal expectations. However, expectations are also shaped by promises by one party to others and by initial practices that are subsequently changed. Actions that may not be formally proscribed in an agreement can constitute a violation of expected inclusionary behavior, such as firing or persecuting a number of members of one or more parties associated with the prior war. Such a definition complicates, but also enriches, cross-national comparisons.

70. Call also links inclusion and exclusion to state legitimacy. Vertical legitimacy he defines as “the broad set of appropriateness of the state and its functioning”⁶²; horizontal legitimacy as “the extent to which various social groups ‘accept and tolerate each other.’”⁶³ He argues that horizontal legitimacy in particular is affected by exclusion, as it is predicated on the inclusion of at least the key groups (through their leadership or elites) in any contested environment.

71. Through his series of qualitative, comparative case studies, Call identifies six conclusions:

- “Precipitating” exclusionary behavior – in which postwar states adopted a policy violating the expectations of rebels – was the cause for recurrence in 9 of 15 cases.
- Exclusion by the state against its former wartime allies also acted as a cause for recurrence.
- A violation of power-sharing arrangements was responsible for 6 of the 15 cases of recurrence.
- Chronic exclusion played a role in two cases of recurrence.
- Exclusionary behavior “was the most important causal factor in 11 of the 15 cases.”⁶⁴
- Exclusion is not the only factor in explaining recurrences, but it is “the most consistently important one.”⁶⁵

⁶¹ Call 2012: 4.

⁶² Call 2012: 43; Kalevi Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War* (Cambridge University Press 1996).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Call 2012: 100.

72. Further to the WDR and Call, evidence from the Political Instability Task Force – formerly known as the State Failure Task Force – adds to the argument. PITF was a CIA-funded study designed to identify factors that increase vulnerability to political instability. PITF considered failure as kinds of political crisis: revolutionary wars, ethnic wars, adverse or disruptive regime transitions, and genocides or politicides. The model employed 117 cases of failure, each matched to two control cases that appeared similar two years before onset but did not experience crisis in the succeeding five years. Through a combination of statistical logistic regression and neural network analyses, the project analyzed 600 variables related to demographic, economic, political and environmental conditions in a state. From this, PITF found that four variables could explain over 80% of all cases of state failure: regime type, determined by executive recruitment and the competitiveness of participation; infant mortality, as an indirect measure of the quality of life; conflict-ridden neighborhood, for whether a state has four or more bordering states with major armed conflict; and state-led discrimination, reflecting political or economic discrimination against minorities.

73. Two features of these findings are particularly important to the concept of political settlements. First, PITF found surprisingly strong results attached to measures of factionalism, which create “extraordinarily high” risks of instability in situations of open competition.⁶⁶ Both partial democracies and partial autocracies, based on a measurement of two variables within the Polity IV dataset, are about 30 times more likely to experience instability than full autocracies and democracies. Within this, factionalism is most common in new democracies, where “party systems are weak and political participation is more likely to flow through networks rooted in traditional identities or other parochial interests.”⁶⁷ Though factionalism exists in autocracies, the strength of its predicting influence is largely based on the presence of open competition.⁶⁸ Second, political and economic discrimination supports – determined by the Minorities at Risk Project’s codings – is strongly linked to instability. Systematic discrimination is found particularly important in models of ethnic war, though it also strengthens the global model.⁶⁹

74. The findings on factionalism, open competition and discrimination highlight important tensions between stability and inclusion in political settlements. The finding on discrimination’s link to political instability, particularly in ethnic wars, is strong evidence for the importance of inclusion. On the other hand, the link between factionalism, open competition, and instability highlights the importance of “inclusive-enough” political settlements and confidence building: open competition and full inclusion may have potentially destabilizing effects in the absence of interim steps to decrease factionalism.

75. In addition to these studies, a wider body of literature on elite-pacting supports the notion that agreements among elites are important for stability.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Call: 99.

⁶⁶ Jack A. Goldstone, Robert H. Bates, David L. Epstein, Ted Robert Gurr, Michael B. Lustik, Monty G. Marshall, Jay Ulfelder, and Mark Woodward, “A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability,” *American Journal of Political Science* 54, no. 1 (January 2010): 190-208.

⁶⁷ Jack A. Goldstone, Robert H. Bates, David L. Epstein, Ted Robert Gurr, Michael B. Lustik, Monty G. Marshall, Jay Ulfelder, and Mark Woodward, “A Global Model for Forecasting Political Instability,” working paper,

⁶⁸ David L. Epstein, Robert Bates, Jack Goldstone, Ida Kristensen, and Sharun O’Halloran, “Democratic Transitions,” *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 3 (July 2006): 551-569.

⁶⁹ Ted Robert Gurr, Mark Woodward, and Monty G. Marshall, “Forecasting Instability: Are Ethnic Wars and Muslim Countries Different?”

⁷⁰ Weingast 1997; Higley and Burton 1998; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1991; Lipjhart 2004.

Elite pacts and stability. Elites can be defined as “persons who, by virtue of their strategic locations in large or otherwise pivotal organizations and movements, are able to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially.” (Leicht and Jenkins, 2010: 163) Burton and Higley argue that “tamed” politics – the foundations for peace and a stable regime – depend on the type of elite arrangements in a country. They find that risks of breakdown are highest under conditions of a “fragmented elite” – i.e. an representative regime, where power is dispersed through a competitive process, but levels of fragmentation are so high that the underlying rules of representation break down: circumvention, fraud, and seizures of power become common. (Burton and Higley, “Political Crises and Elite Settlements,” in *Elites, Crises and the Origins of Regimes*.) Burton and Higley thus argue that “settlements tame politics by establishing relatively inclusive elite cartels.” Dogan and Higley (1998) argue that “regimes are born in crises and elite confrontations; they originate in political impasses and elite power struggles fraught with the potential for great violence.” Karl (1986) has linked elite pacts to economic development, arguing that the development of norms and organizations that facilitate cooperation lays the groundwork for long-term economic change.

76. Elite pacts have been particularly emphasized in two related literatures: one on the implementation of peace agreements; the other on the stability of democratic regimes. Hartzell and Hoddie use a regression analysis to show that power-sharing supports lasting peace following episodes of violence.⁷¹ Schneckener, considering cases of power-sharing in European countries over time, highlights that political elites and the institutional arrangements they develop are critical to avoiding a breakdown of peace agreements.⁷² Rothchild argues that pacts are “dependent upon the maintenance of balanced elite power and a preparedness to resolve conflicts among pact members through ongoing bargaining encounters.”⁷³ Elite settlements have also been used to explain both regime transitions and democratic stability.⁷⁴

77. We would judge all of this, taken together, as constituting sufficient initial evidence to warrant further examination. That the WDR and Call’s study, operating in parallel, reached very similar conclusions is grounds for increased confidence, as is the fact that those two studies in turn reinforce conclusions reached by the PITF studies. The findings reinforce earlier conclusions from the qualitative literature.⁷⁵

78. Still, to say that it is conclusive evidence would be overstatement. These are still preliminary findings, and the evidence base, particularly in terms of the strength of institutions, is slim. What’s more, the studies such as they are leave unanswered questions about the balance between inclusion and exclusion. How inclusive is inclusive enough? Under what circumstances can excluded actors pose a genuine threat to the stability of the settlement?

⁷¹ Hartzell and Hoddie 2003.

⁷² Ulrich Schneckener, “Making Power-Sharing Work: Lessons from Successes and Failures in Ethnic Conflict Regulation.” *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no 2 (2002): 203-228

⁷³ Donald Rothchild, “Settlement Terms and Postagreement Stability,” in *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, eds Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens (Lynne Reiner 2002): 125.

⁷⁴ Lijphart (1969) explains the roots of stable democracies in deeply divided societies as a function of “consociationalism”: “The leaders of the rival subcultures may engage in competitive behavior, and thus further aggravate mutual tensions and political instability, but they may also make deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation.” Building on this, Lustick (----) later argued that stability rested on two elite dynamics: either consociationalism or control, in which one group used its relative power to maintain peace. In consociational democracies, stability rests on elite willingness for cooperation. Diamond (1994) explains: “elites choose democracy instrumentally because they perceive that the costs of attempting to suppress their political opponents exceed the costs of tolerating them (and engaging them in constitutionally regulated competition). O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) focus on elite processes to explain how transitions to democracy and subsequent democratic consolidation occur.

⁷⁵ Stedman 1996; Brown 1996; Stedman, Rothchild and Cousens 2002.

79. In this regard, it is important to note that the WDR also incorporated the notion that some forms of exclusion not only may not threaten political stability, they may be necessary for stability. This argument draws on a line of literature about ‘spoilers’ and similar dynamics. For example, Nillson argues that strategic exclusion of actors outside peace agreements will not *necessarily* disrupt peace. Lanz argues for a framework to determine who should be included in peace processes, depending on whether their inclusion would augment the peace process and would be consistent with the values of international actors.⁷⁶ Hartzell and Hoddie argue that power sharing is most effective when peace agreements address power-sharing across multiple political, territorial, military or economic dimensions.⁷⁷ Rothchild and Roeder argue against explicit power-sharing in ethnically divided countries since, “these institutions frequently shape political processes so that there are greater incentives to act in ways that threaten democracy and the peace.”⁷⁸

80. Stedman has, similarly, argued that spoilers who continue to fight do not always undermine peace, depending on the strategies employed by those seeking peace.⁷⁹ In other words, there is a relationship between degree of exclusion and the capacity of the state (sometimes supplemented by UN or other peacekeepers) to combat recalcitrant forces. This is an important side note: whereas the provision of external security forces for peace implementation (i.e. peacekeeping) has traditionally been viewed as having an impartial function relative to the political settlement, increasingly UN peacekeepers have been mandated to “extend state authority” including by helping the state to demobilize or even defeat recalcitrant or rebelling forces.⁸⁰ The presence of such external security assistance obviously alters the equation for state actors as to the degree of exclusion they can get away with.

81. There is also an initial literature on the ways in which elite pacts and their renegotiation are also related to patterns in organized crime. Some of this relates to post-conflict cases – for example, Guatemala is a case where organized crime has emerged as a massive source of instability for the state in the period after the settlement of the long-running civil war there (Gavigan 2009). Guinea-Bissau is another example. However, the relationship between organized crime and political settlements is not limited to post-conflict cases. For example, some analyses of the upsurge in violence in Mexico point to a triggering event being the challenge posed by the first election of a non-PRI government in 2000, to an existing political settlement developed under successive PRI governments whereby organized criminal networks were largely left alone in exchange for corrupt flows to government officials and electoral and financial support to the government. Organized criminal groups re-acted negatively against the proposed change and went on the warpath against the state, resulting in a massive spike in homicide deaths in the ensuing years. (For an account of the dynamics of democratization and organized crime in Mexico see in particular O’Neil 2012.)

82. Finally, we note that the emphasis on inclusion in political settlements aligns with a greater emphasis on inclusive institutions in the literature on ‘new institutional economics’. That literature starts with the assertion that institutions are the fundamental cause of long-run growth.⁸¹ Recent

⁷⁶ David Lanz, “Who Gets a Seat at the Table? A Framework for Understanding the Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Peace Negotiations,” *International Negotiation* 16, no. 2 (2011): 275-295.

⁷⁷ Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie, “Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 2 (April 2003): 318-332.

⁷⁸ Donald Rothchild and Philip G. Roeder, *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy after Civil War* (Cornell University Press 2005): p. 30

⁷⁹ Stephen John Stedman, “Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes,” *International Security* 22, no. 2 (Autumn 1997): 5-53.

⁸⁰ Bruce Jones, Richard Gowan and Jake Sherman, *Building on Brahimi: Peacekeeping in an Era of Strategic Uncertainty* (NYU Center on International Cooperation 2009).

⁸¹ Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James Robinson, “Institutions as the Fundamental Cause of Long-Run Growth” (National Bureau of Economic Research 2004); Dani Rodrik, Arvind Subramanian, and Francesco Trebbi, “Institutions Rule: the Primacy of Institutions over Geography and Integration in Economic

applications of that literature to state failure emphasize inclusion. For example Acemoglu and Robinson, in arguing that the fundamental difference between rich and poor countries relates to the inclusivity of their political institutions, also find that the presence of extractive or inclusive institutions creates a self-reinforcing cycle and propose that by creating incentives for outside actors to become part of the elite, an extractive state is more likely to suffer from infighting and civil war.⁸² Similarly, North, Wallis and Weingast argue that limited access orders – where institutions and organizations are controlled by a narrow elite and defined by interpersonal relationships are more violence-prone than states that have impersonal institutions.⁸³ They show a “virtuous circle” that discourages violence in open access orders, predicated on citizens’ belief in equality and inclusion; the channeling of dissent through political avenues; and the costs imposed on any organization that attempts to limit access. While these studies are not specifically focused on fragile states, they point to broad conclusions about the role of inclusion that reinforces the initial findings cited above.

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What can outside actors do about this?

83. This discussion of political settlements and their inclusiveness or not may be abstract, if it’s not something that development policy can address. This paper does not address the issue of how to apply these questions in a specific case; but an adjacent set of case studies identifies a number of initial storylines about influence that can be subject to more refined testing.

84. An initial analysis of cases found that external governments could have some impact on the direction of political settlements, within limits. We found evidence of several ‘storylines’ of potential impact – all to be tested by more in depth study. These were:

- (1) Direct support to government, and policy engagement to try to persuade government elites to adopt an inclusion agenda.

This approach was adopted by field teams in one of two circumstances: where the government was already inclined towards an inclusion agenda, so ‘persuasion’ efforts were really pushing on an open door; and where there was more concern about the direction of government efforts but (a) limited political tolerance by the host government for ‘interference’ and (b) limited political support from headquarters for creating an kind of political tension with the government in question. At this stage, we have no evidence either way as to whether or not persuasion efforts work in the later cases – Rwanda is a live example.

- (2) Support to opposition groups and civil society actors, to increase their ability to make their own claims for inclusion in the political settlement.

Development actors often invest in minority groups or marginalized groups from a socio-economic and poverty perspective; but it is possible to focus that support on helping such groups develop their capacity for political engagement, articulation of an agenda, political party development, and similar. The extent to which this is tolerated by national authorities

Development” (National Bureau of Economic Research 2002); Barry Weingast, “The Economic Role of Political Institutions,” *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization* 11, no. 1 (1995): 1-31; Przeworski 2001.

⁸² Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail* (Crown Business 2012).

⁸³ Douglass C. North, John Joseph Wallis and Barry R. Weingast, *Violence and Social Orders* (Cambridge University Press 2009).

varies from case to case, and is influenced by the degree to which donor governments are explicit about the political dimensions of their engagement.

- (3) Creating normative space: investing in research, or public debate, around issues like minority rights, to increase pressure on established elites.

In our case work, we found ample evidence of donors engaging in project activity designed to create normative space around inclusion issues. Some of this was in-country, some of this was undertaken at a regional or sub-regional level. The theory of change operating here was that fostering a national debate on issues like minority rights could help to create an operating environment in which marginal or excluded groups could develop their case for inclusion – i.e. not a strategy of persuading government actors to adopt inclusive agendas, but rather a strategy of helping to change the political realities and thereby make exclusion harder to sustain.

- (4) Direct mediation between parties (often through diplomatic rather than developmental arms of government), or financial and capacity-building support to national mediation or dialogue processes (often through developmental tools.)

In the contemporary period, few if any moments of political settlement after violence – whether peace agreements, or transition pacts, or post-election pacts or similar – are negotiated with no mediation support from external actors. Many settlements that we examined were negotiated with the help of regional or international actors; often both. These were often foreign ministry or UN/RO political actors, rather than aid actors. In that community, the focus on inclusion for normative grounds is less developed than in the aid community, but there is an acute awareness of the risk to a settlement posed by groups that are left out. The focus in that community is on spoilers and their ability to undermine a settlement from the inside. (Though it is worth noting that the UN's DPKO, DPA and PBSO read a draft of this report and asked to engage with CIC on the implications of the report for the UN's peacebuilding strategies.)

- (5) Coercive strategies designed to compel government elites to adopt more inclusive strategies, or forego specific exclusive or abusive policies.

Peacekeeping operations increasingly undertake 'extension of state authority' activities designed to help an elected or otherwise (internationally) legitimated government weaken the military challenge posed by excluded actors. That changes the underlying realities in which the above strategies may then play out. In addition, economic and aid actors may impose penalties or sanctions of a range of types to try to induce inclusive behavior, or more commonly to attempt to stave off moves at specific exclusion strategies. Sometimes these are motivated by human rights concerns rather than stability concerns.

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85. To sum up: inclusion matters, but how much? Are some forms of inclusion (elite versus broad social) more stable than others? Under what circumstances? And to what degree can various forms of inclusion compensate for institutional weaknesses during the longer period it will take to develop and deepen institutional capacities? And what can external actors – not just through their development arms – do about any of this? These are just some of the questions that these studies have underscored. We address them in the attached paper on 'Research Agenda' which pulls together the research agenda that derives from this study, as well as the knowledge agenda which emerges from the initial case work.

